

OLIVE HILLS



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1 olive hills murray valley hwy
browns plains front view
dec1987



olive hills murray valley hwy
browns plains detail of tower
dec1987



olive hills murray valley hwy
browns plains rear view
dec1987

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - June 28, 1999

Olive Hills comprises a large country homestead and complex of related farm buildings. The homestead was constructed in 1886 for Hugh Fraser, a Scot who had worked at the Docker's Bontharambo property (near Wangaratta) before taking up land in the Brown's plains district. Fraser was an early pioneer of the Rutherglen district; he was the first president of the Shire and served seven terms as a councillor. At one stage Fraser controlled some 2350 acres. His decision to build an elaborate residence may have been inspired by the example of Bontharambo or a desire to "one up" his neighbour GF Morris who lived opposite at Fairfield. The architect of Olive Hills is not known. Fraser's pastoral fortunes did not survive the depression of the 1890s. In 1898 he sold Olive Hills, its 100 acres of vineyard, fruit trees and land sown to wheat and oats together with pasturage to Hugh McKenzie, a New Zealand contractor, (and his family) who instigated many improvements. Since 1938 Olive Hills has been owned by the prominent local identity Mr Richard Knight. Olive Hills homestead is a large brick country homestead built on a hill overlooking the Murray Valley Highway. The tower is a striking feature of this well sited and finely constructed country property. The homestead is substantially intact and included extensive living quarters underground, an unusual feature and a practical one in the hot summer months. The internal fittings, design and detailing are of great interest for its fine craftsmanship. The additional elements of the homestead complex, including the smithy, coach house, winery, still room, workmen's hut and established trees add to the importance of the homestead building. They bear testimony to Olive Hills as a working farm.

Permit Exemptions

General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

Places of worship: In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must [notify](#) the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

Subdivision/consolidation: Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

Construction dates 1886,

Heritage Act Categories Registered place,

Hermes Number 166

Property Number

Extent of Registration

AMENDMENT OF REGISTER OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Historic Building No. 698.

Olive Hills, Brown's Plains

Shire of Rutherglen

to the extent of all of the buildings and all of the land included on the Certificate of Title entered in the Register Book Volume 6175 Folio 1234863 according to the plan (Appendix A) held by the Ministry for Planning and Environment.

[Victoria Government Gazette G36 21 September 1988 p.2872]

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>